



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**September 22, 2020** Contact Kris Bifulco - [kbifulco@aocmhp.org](mailto:kbifulco@aocmhp.org) or call (503)-399-7201

**Grants Awarded to 18 Organizations with Goal of Reducing Suicide and Suicide Attempts Among LGBTQ+ Oregonians**

*"The Prideville Resiliency Project aims to create a culture where people in Crook County do not have to choose between who they are and where they live." – Crook County Health Department, LGBTQ+ mini-grant recipient*

The Oregon Alliance (Alliance) to Prevent Suicide and the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP), in partnership with the Oregon Health Authority's COVID-19 response team for suicide prevention, are pleased to announce the award of a total of **\$215,000** community-based organizations to support LGBTQ+ communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of the funding, awarded as 18 mini-grants of up to \$20,000, is to reduce risk for suicide and suicide attempts among LGBTQ+ people, with priority given to Black, Tribal, LatinX, communities of color, rural, frontier, or disabled populations.

Early in the pandemic, the suicide prevention COVID-19 response team at OHA (with members from the Public Health Division and Health Systems Division) identified the need for resources for LGBTQ+ communities and secured dedicated funding for this project.<sup>1</sup>

The goal of the grants is to build protective factors by increasing opportunities for life-affirming connection, resources and healthcare to vulnerable and isolated LGBTQ youth and adults during this time of increased isolation and stress. The 18 funded projects include a wide range of creative and community-centered approaches such as increasing access to gender-affirming care, expanding positive youth development activities, the creation of community-wide collaborative efforts, and a podcast to elevate LGBTQ+ youth voices.

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*-Citizens for Safe Schools, LGBTQ+ mini-grant recipient Klamath County Oregon*

OHA contracted with AOCMHP and the Alliance to manage the mini-grant process. The LGBTQ+ Advisory group of the Alliance recommended that OHA create a low-barrier application process for mini-grants of up to \$20,000 each. AOCMHP received 81 completed applications, representing 30 of Oregon's 36 counties. The high level of interest and diverse proposals for this funding opportunity are an indicator of urgent need for funding to support LGBTQ+ communities, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The funded projects are listed on the next page.

<sup>1</sup> For example, even before the onset of COVID-19, the Oregon Healthy Teens Survey showed that half of LGBTQ 8<sup>th</sup> graders considered suicide and a quarter attempted.



### Summary of Mini-Grant Awards

Organization	Amount	County	Project Description
<b>Black and Beyond Binary Collective</b>	\$15,000.00	statewide	Black & Beyond the Binary works to provide resourced, curate community portals to access Black joy and healing, and create safety through mutual aid efforts. They are working toward increased access to culturally appropriate community healing practices on a larger scale and with COVID protocols.
<b>Crook County Health Department</b>	\$20,000.00	Crook	The COVID-19 crisis encouraged a cohort of LGBTQ+ community organizers, mental health workers, and anti-racist allies to host the first of its kind “Prideville March” in Prineville this past June. They will build on the momentum of Prideville by supporting their local GSA, reinvigorating the Prineville PFLAG chapter, creating and implementing a culturally relevant program series for LGBTQ+ youth to foster resiliency, offering county-wide workshops to build cultural humility skills for serving the LGBTQ+ population, and to expanding accessibility of Prideville 2021.
<b>Columbia Gorge Pride Alliance</b>	\$20,000.00	Hood River, Wasco	Columbia Gorge Pride Alliance seeks funding to support its growth from a volunteer organization into a 501 (c) (3), launch a teen council, develop a community strategic plan, and expand existing programs and resources to address suicide protective factors for LGBTQ+ youth.
<b>HIV Alliance</b>	\$20,000.00	Lane	Will provide behavioral health and social support services to transgender, genderqueer, nonbinary, gender-non-confirming, questioning, and gender diverse people in Lane County. They will host virtual support groups and events, drop-in telehealth counseling, and a weekend support call line in partnership with TransPonder.
<b>OR Institute of Technology</b>	\$14,000.00	Klamath	Will develop a campaign to publish relevant and vital resources, support systems, information to increase protective factors of the LGBTQ+ community in Klamath Falls as well as a resource management database tool to feature local LGBTQ+ supportive resources and healthcare providers, and a centralized website to host all related information.
<b>Citizens for Safe Schools</b>	\$14,000.00	Klamath	“Pride Circle” for LGBTQ+ and Two-Spirit youth age 8-24 and supportive adults. Pride Circle will include youth-led peer mentoring and other levels of mentoring circles through Zoom to include social support, identity exploration, LGBTQ+ history, medical supports and resources, healthy relationship information, self-advocacy, and social-emotional skills building
<b>Central OR Disability Support Network</b>	\$12,500.00	Lane, Jackson, Deschutes, Douglas, Josephine	Three online learning opportunities for LGBTQ+ youth with disabilities and their supporters who live in Oregon’s rural and frontier areas. Youth who register will also be mailed a self-care kit. An additional learning opportunity will be provided for families, caregivers, and other community members to learn about supporting LGBTQ+ youth and resources. Finally, they will host an online resource fair highlighting Oregon-wide resources for LGBTQ+ youth with disabilities.



<b>Lake Health District</b>	\$10,000.00	Lake	ALLIES (All Lived Led in Equal Support) program to increase protective factors for LGBTQ+ youth in Lake County, focus on youth in foster care. Two ALLIES trainings for foster parents (one in November and one in February).
<b>Beyond Boom and Bust</b>	\$10,000.00	Josephine	Story gathering and storytelling project that reflects the experiences of LGBTQ+ people in rural Oregon through dance performance to promote connection and resilience. Organization and initiative led by LGBTQ+ community members.
<b>Confederated Tribe of Siletz Indians</b>	\$5,000.00	Lincoln	Tribal LGBTQ2S+ program to promoting and strengthening cultural ties and connection. They plan to host a virtual Queer Indigenous Gathering that centers voices of Two Spirit and queer Indigenous activists to honor culture while offering social connection under the theme of “Culture is Prevention.”
<b>Project DOVE</b>	\$3,825.00	Malheur	Reinstatement of LGBTQIA+ support group for survivors of domestic violence that was cut due to budget constraints. They also want to expand services to include a PFLAG group, a young adults support group, a youth group, and a group for older adults (all LGBTQ+, specific focus on Latinx and Native youth, and TPOC).
<b>Common Ground</b>	\$2,000.00	Yamhill	Club for LGBTQ+ students or alumni of George Fox University, though not formally affiliated with the school. Funds support their weekly meetings during the school year, including aiding group facilitators in fostering effective coping skills and increasing access to care.
<b>Multnomah County Student Health Centers</b>	\$18,704.00	Multnomah, statewide	Podcast project led by LGBTQ+ and BIPOC youth that talks about mental health and resiliency from multiple perspectives. This would be supported by an LGBTQ+ staff member who has experience in podcasting. It will be paired with social media outreach to reach LGBTQ+ and BIPOC youth statewide.
<b>BRF Brown Hope</b>	\$15,000.00	Multnomah	Two programs: Power Hour and the Black Resilience Fund. Due to COVID, the Power Hour program is shifting from in-person gathering to an online platform—funds will support this transition and the development of a safe and intimate online space for community members to connect, build power, and collectively heal. The Black Resilience Fund was launched on June 1 to foster healing, hope, and community connection after the murder of George Floyd.
<b>Brave Space LLC</b>	\$13,302.00	Multnomah	Free weekly support groups that will run for 18 months: BIPOC transgender, two spirit, and non-binary people; and trans-feminine and AMAB non-binary people.
<b>NARA NW</b>	\$9,669.00	Multnomah	Specialized case management to LGBTQIA2S+ clients to help with removal of barriers to appropriate care including costs associated with official name and gender marker changes and supporting Native American cultural practices.
<b>Friendly House</b>	\$7,000.00	Multnomah	Friendly House serves LGBTQ+ older adults through the SAGE Metro Portland program. Want to purchase up to 9 tablets to increase access to virtual services for older adults who may lack technological resources.
<b>Friends of the Children Portland</b>	\$5,000.00	Multnomah	Events for LGBTQ+ participants including Drag Story Hours, Pride celebrations, and a youth drag show, and would be supported by the staff’s LGBTQ+ Affinity Group.

### Addendum: Quotes from Awardees for Press Release

"Brave Space, LLC is thrilled that this grant will give us the opportunity to offer two support groups to our most impacted communities: one for QT BIPOC folk, and the other for trans-femme and AMAB non-binary folk. Offering online groups also allows us to serve rural folk, who have far less access to affirming community. Further, this grant allows us to deepen our social justice work by uplifting and funding QTPOC and trans-femme facilitators and businesses." **Kate Kaufman, Brave Space LLC**

"As a grant recipient, our team is deeply grateful for this opportunity to focus on LGBTQ youth in our rural, conservative county. Queer people of Lake County have attempted to create LGBTQ-friendly social situations prior to COVID-19 restrictions and have had their efforts greeted with hostility. With this grant, we are excited about creating virtual safe spaces to support our young people through a variety of means. Thank you." **from Jane Lincoln, a licensed clinical social worker with Lake Health Clinic**

#### GLOSSARY

*The language used to describe gender and sexuality is continually evolving. Many identity-describing words and phrases are highly personal, so the way the word is used for one person may not represent all who use that term.*

QT: queer and transgender

POC: Black, Indigenous, people of color

Trans-femme: term that refers to transgender people who identify as femme or feminine

AMAB: assigned male at birth

Non-binary: a term used to describe individuals with gender identities that are beyond male and female, both male and female, neither male nor female, or something else entirely.

Two-Spirit: an umbrella term used in many Tribes to describe people who are of a third gender or other gender variant.

Two-Spirit people may have ceremonial or traditional importance in their tribe.

QTPOC: queer and/or transgender people of color

"HIV Alliance and TransPonder are honored to offer support to trans/gender diverse Oregonians during this critical time. Our Eugene-Springfield community has experienced so much trauma over the last months. With wildfires now displacing many in our community and burning through our cities' backyard, the need to come together is more important than ever." **—HIV Alliance**

"As an isolated, rural, underserved community this new funding through the Oregon Alliance to Prevent Suicide is vital to Klamath County. This grant award ensures our agency has the capacity to insert critical supports into the lives of our at-risk LGBTQ+ and Two-Spirit youth. We are looking forward to creating positive spaces, community, and connectivity during a time where life is chaotic and lonely." **—Citizens for Safe Schools, Klamath County, Oregon**

"The Prideville Resiliency Project aims to create a culture where people in Crook County do not have to choose between who they are and where they live." **— Crook County Health Department**

"Suicide can be a big risk for member for the LGBTQ+ community. Increasing knowledge and acceptance, both of self and by family is a crucial protective factor. Central Oregon Disability Support Network, Matthew Dawson and Shauna Signorini are teaming up to support young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer LGBTQ+ or are questioning. Through online learning opportunities rural people under the age of 26 will connect with others like themselves to talk about "finding their people" and explore real time stress management activities." **Central Oregon Disability Support Network**